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R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMITTEE OF THE OVERSEERS

OF

H A R V A R D C O L L E G E

APPOINTED TO VISIT THE MEDICAL SCHOOL

FOR THE YEAR 1866.

Submitted January 17, 1867.

B O S T O N :

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1867.

IN BOARD OF OVERSEERS OF HARVARD COLLEGE,
Boston, January 17, 1867.

The Secretary, in behalf of WINSLOW LEWIS, M.D., submitted the Report of the Committee appointed to Visit the Medical School ; and the same was accepted, and referred to the Corporation.

Attest :

NATHANIEL B. SHURTLEFF,

Secretary.

REPORT.

TO THE PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF OVERSEERS
OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

GENTLEMEN,—Agreeably to the notice of the President and Board of Overseers of Harvard University, the Committee to examine the Medical School, consisting of Drs. Winslow Lewis, J. Mason Warren, Samuel Cabot, John Green, George Hayward, Ezra Palmer, Daniel D. Slade, C. G. Putnam, William Read, Horatio R. Storer, Clement A. Walker and George H. Lyman, visited the School, inspected the rooms, received the reports of the Professors, and beg leave to present the following report:—

The various rooms were found to be in a satisfactory condition. The state of the School will be best shown by the following digest of the reports of the Professors.

In the department of Obstetrics and Medical Jurisprudence—Professor D. Humphreys Storer—the full number of lectures has been given during the term, and many valuable specimens have been added to the Museum illustrative of this branch.

In the department of Pathological Anatomy—Professor John B. S. Jackson—the usual course has been pursued of lectures on General Pathological Anatomy, and recent specimens, alternating with lectures on prepared specimens. The Anatomical Museum has been enriched, during the past year, by one hundred new specimens. A Descriptive Catalogue is now in preparation by the Curator.

The department of Clinical Medicine, conducted by Professor H. I. Bowditch, assisted by Adjunct Professor Calvin Ellis, has been of

great advantage to the students, who have availed themselves of its practical and theoretical teachings in increasing numbers. It is proposed to extend its sphere of usefulness, during the coming term, by the formation of a corps of assistants selected from advanced students. The plan of requiring three years' study in some recognized medical school, of candidates for a diploma, is suggested.

Professor O. W. Holmes, of the Department of Anatomy and Physiology, reports that the customary course of instruction has been given during the winter term, to the largest class ever present at the lectures. The department has been strengthened by the following appointments:—Dr. Jeffries Wyman as Professor of Comparative Anatomy and Physiology; Dr. C. E. Brown-Séquard as Professor of the Physiology and Pathology of the Nervous System; Dr. D. W. Cheever as Assistant Professor of Anatomy; and Dr. J. S. Lombard as Assistant Professor of Physiology.

In the department of Theory and Practice—Professor G. C. Shattuck, and Adjunct Professor C. E. Buckingham—the usual number of lectures has been given, besides visits to the medical wards of the Massachusetts General Hospital and the surgical wards of the City Hospital. The late Dr. Gould and Dr. Minot have delivered lectures and made visits in the medical wards of the Massachusetts General Hospital during the spring term. Dr. Tyler has given instruction in Psychological Medicine.

Professor H. J. Bigelow, of the Surgical Department, states that sixty lectures were given during the winter term, and abundant opportunity offered for the study of practical surgery in the visits and numerous operations at the Massachusetts General Hospital. At the City Hospital, Ophthalmology has been illustrated theoretically and practically by Dr. H. W. Williams; and at the Boston Dispensary very useful instruction has been given in out-practice and minor surgery. Since the appointment of Dr. R. M. Hodges as Adjunct Professor of Surgery, it is proposed to increase the number of lectures in the coming term. Recitations were held during the summer term.

The regular course of lectures was given by the Professor of Chemistry—Dr. John Bacon—during the winter session. In the summer session recitations were heard, and instruction given in practical chemistry in the laboratory. Should the number of students desiring practical instruction increase, it will become necessary to enlarge the laboratory. The recent appointment of Dr. J. C. White as Adjunct Professor, will add to the efficiency of this department.

Dr. E. H. Clarke, Professor of Materia Medica, reports that the required number of lectures was given during the winter term; and during the summer the usual course of recitations held, either by himself or his assistant, Dr. F. E. Oliver.

The Museum of Materia Medica is entirely inadequate for the purposes for which it is used, and an increase in material and space

is desired. The increase in the number of students is adverted to, and the want of accommodation for them in the present building.

The Dean of the Medical Faculty, Dr. G. C. Shattuck, reports as follows:—"Every department of the School has been characterized, during the past year, by activity and well-directed energy. The School began with three professors; it now numbers twenty-three professors, adjunct professors, assistant professors and instructors. The establishment of a summer term has been attended with gratifying success. In connection with the lectures, the School has the advantages of the Massachusetts General Hospital, the City Hospital, the Boston Dispensary, and the Eye and Ear Infirmary. The attention of the Committee is called to the urgent need of greater accommodation, either by adding to the present structure or the erection of a new building. The expenses of the School amount to \$5000 yearly, which sum is deducted from the fees of the Professors, with the exception of the small income from the Jackson Fund. The funds of the School have been chiefly derived from medical men; and in view of this fact, it seems proper to make an appeal for material aid to the community. It is clear that something must be done in this direction, if the number of students is to be increased and the position of the School maintained."

The reports given above furnish abundant evidence of the continued prosperity and the growing importance and usefulness of the Medical School. It is now eighty-four years since the first efforts were made for its establishment, and its history is one of success from its inception to the present time.

The following account is a brief *résumé* of its rise and progress:—

Before 1783 no medical school existed in Massachusetts, and the study of medicine was pursued with much difficulty. No regular instruction was given; the only available means were to go to Europe—a thing not easy of accomplishment in those days—or to follow the private practice of some physician. The war of the revolution gave an impulse to the profession of medicine, and showed the necessity and wisdom of giving proper facilities for its support. The government of Harvard College founded a school in 1783, with the following corps of Professors:—Dr. John Warren was Professor of Anatomy and Surgery, Dr. Aaron Dexter of Chemistry and *Materia Medica*, and Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse of the Theory and Practice of Medicine. The class of students attending lectures numbered twenty, and was drawn from all parts of New England. In 1785, the degree of Bachelor of Medicine was first conferred, a probation of seven years being then exacted before the candidate became a Doctor of Medicine. From 1806 to 1810 the Faculty received accessions to its numbers by the appointment of Dr. John C. Warren as Adjunct Professor of Anatomy and Surgery, Dr. John Gorham as Adjunct Professor of Chemistry, and Dr. James Jackson as Lecturer on Clinical Medicine. The facilities for medical instruction in Cam-

bridge being insufficient, the School was removed to Boston, and in 1810 lectures were given by the increased staff, the course occupying three months instead of six weeks as heretofore. Donations of specimens were then first given for the formation of an anatomical collection. In this year (1810) efforts were made by some members of the profession to found another school, with equal privileges to this, and the attempt nearly succeeded. Party feeling ran high, and the subject of the schools became mixed with the strong political feeling then raging, and had it not been for the strenuous exertions of Drs. J. C. Warren and James Jackson, there is reason to believe that the Harvard Medical College might have succumbed, for it was then impossible for two schools to have existed in the contracted field of Boston. But the storm was weathered, and three years later a grant of land in Mason Street was received from the State, on which, in 1816, what was then considered a handsome building was erected. At this time two more Professors were added to the Faculty—Dr. Jacob Bigelow in the department of *Materia Medica*, and Dr. Walter Channing in that of Midwifery. The School continued to prosper, and thirty years later the number of students attending the lectures had risen to 160, and greater accommodation became necessary. A liberal gift of land from Dr. George Parkman, the contributions of some of the wealthy citizens of Boston, and the sale of the old college building furnished the means, and the building in Grove Street was the result.

One department of the College deserves especial notice—that of the Museum of Anatomical Specimens. This collection, one of the largest in the country, was presented to Harvard University by Dr. John C. Warren, with a sum of money for its preservation, in December, 1847, being the result of his labors, with those of his friends and pupils, for more than forty years. The following gentlemen were among the chief contributors to it, or were engaged in making preparations for it:—Drs. James Jackson, John Gorham, Spaulding of Portsmouth, Rufus Wyman, Winslow Lewis, George Parkman, Wm. Gamage, Jr., Edward Warren, Alexander E. Hosack, J. B. S. Jackson, J. M. Warren, and Samuel Parkman. Since the collection came into the possession of the College it has been greatly augmented by gifts from various sources, and by the assiduous labors of the Curator, Dr. J. B. S. Jackson. Drs. O. W. Holmes, H. J. Bigelow, R. M. Hodges, D. W. Cheever, and others, have made important preparations for it. Valuable contributions were made to it by the late Dr. George Hayward. It contains about 2800 specimens.

The collection has now outgrown the space devoted to it in the College, and as no additional means of accommodation are available, the question of a new building at once presents itself.

The present building was erected at a time when the number of students was small, and the necessity of removal from Mason Street pressing. Its situation, in close proximity to the Massachusetts Gene-

ral Hospital, is perhaps the best for its purposes; but it is defective in construction, and constantly in danger of being destroyed by fire.

There is great need of a good medical library in connection with the College. The number of books now in possession of the College is not large, but is of great value. They are, however, accessible to few, and not increasing with the advancement of medical science. Should the library be given space enough, and thrown open, under proper restrictions, to the professional public, and donations solicited, there is every reason to believe that a rapid growth in its size and importance would result. At present, Boston and its neighborhood possess no complete medical library. Collections of medical books exist in the University Library at Cambridge, and in the Boston Athenæum and Public Library, but none of them fully meet the wants of the profession. It is thought desirable by your committee, that the medical books in the University Library at Cambridge, especially the Boylston Collection, which are very valuable and but little used, should be added to the Library of the Medical College in Boston, if this can be legally effected.

The class of students now contains somewhat over 300 members, and the lecture rooms of the College are too small to accommodate properly more than half that number. While the increase in material for instruction and the number of pupils is gratifying, and gives promise of yet greater growth in the future, the limited capacity of the building becomes painfully manifest. Your committee would therefore suggest that if it is not feasible to erect a new structure on the present site, or elsewhere, a fire-proof building, capable of containing the Anatomical Museum and the Library, be erected, at a proper distance from the College. Of the importance of a fire-proof building for containing the Anatomical Museum, the destruction by fire of the splendid collection which the late Dr. Valentine Mott had passed his life in forming, is an example. The value of the present collection belonging to the Medical School can hardly be estimated in money; the loss of it would be irreparable, as it could not be replaced by purchase. To meet the expense of the outlay required by this plan, it would seem proper to make an appeal to the public, who are interested in giving to the medical man the best facilities for a thorough education.

The College now numbers among its professors, or has connected with it, some of the most distinguished men in their departments in the country. In addition to the instructions of the able corps of professors, adjunct professors, assistant professors and instructors, the student can avail himself of the teachings of the Massachusetts General Hospital, City Hospital, Dispensary, and Eye and Ear Infirmary in Boston, and valuable courses of lectures in Cambridge by Professors Wyman, Agassiz, and others.

It would increase the efficiency of some of the departments of instruction, could wards in the Hospital be set apart, or, what would

be better, could hospitals be established for the treatment of the following affections:—syphilitic diseases, skin diseases, midwifery, diseases of women, and diseases of children. These branches would be much better and more systematically illustrated for the purposes of instruction, were they treated in separate hospitals. As it is, the first of the above-mentioned classes is not received into our City Hospitals, only a limited number of the second, none of the third, and but few of the fourth and fifth.

The attention of the Overseers is earnestly called to this matter, in the hope that through their influence, steps may be taken to further the interests, not only of the medical profession, but of the public at large, by carrying out the suggestions above mentioned.

All of which is respectfully submitted.